

## **St. Anne Roman Catholic Church Complex**

1000 St. Anne

Alternate name: St. Anne de Detroit

Local	✓	12/16/97
State	✓	5/14/75
State Marker	✓	9/3/85
National	✓	6/3/76



St. Anne



### **Historic overview:**

Established in 1701 with the arrival of Cadillac and the founding of Detroit, St. Anne's is the second oldest Catholic parish in the United States and is said to be the oldest continuous institution between the Alleghenies and the Rockies. Between these mountain ranges, only Native American institutions have a longer existence. This extraordinary institution now occupies its eighth church, built as a result of a sale of the downtown site of the seventh church in the mid-1880s, and the division of the French Catholic Community into two parishes, St. Anne and St. Joachim. St. Joachim became the French language "ethnic" parish until its closure in 1989, and St. Anne slowly evolved into a neighborhood parish.

St. Anne's most famous pastor was Fr. Gabriel Richard (1767-1832). He ministered to French Catholics and English-speaking Protestants prior to the establishment of the First Protestant Society. Beyond church affairs, his influence was so great that he must be considered Detroit's second founder. He brought the first printing press to Michigan, and the first pipe organ. He was the Michigan Territory's first representative in the U.S. Congress, and co-founded the University of Michigan. Another of his legacies was the church he built that served as a parish from 1828-1848.

St. Anne's slowly lost its French character as the City's French community declined and immigration slowed during the automobile boom years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Since then, the parish began ministry to the Hispanic community. In the mid-1990s the parish began an extensive restoration program, especially for the church, in preparation for the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of both the parish and the city.

